



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Personnel Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2022 for Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities--Personnel Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities, Assistance Listing Number 84.325K. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1820-0028.

DATES:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 70 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 130 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Pre-Application Webinar Information: No later than 5 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) will post details on pre-recorded informational webinars designed to provide technical assistance to interested applicants. Links to the webinars may be found at www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/new-osep-grants.html.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 27, 2021 (86 FR 73264) and available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on February 13, 2019, and, in part, describe the transition from the requirement to register in SAM.gov a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to the implementation of the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). More information on the phase-out of DUNS numbers is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/fofo/docs/unique-entity-identifier-transition-fact-sheet.pdf>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For Absolute Priority 1 Focus Area A: Sunyoung Ahn, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, room 5012A, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5076. Telephone: (202) 245-6460. Email: Sunyoung.Ahn@ed.gov.

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If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf
(TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay
Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of this program are to
(1) help address State-identified needs for personnel
preparation in special education, early intervention,
related services, and regular education to work with
children, including infants, toddlers, and youth with
disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the
necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that
have been determined through scientifically based research,
to be successful in serving those children.

Priorities: This competition includes two absolute
priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v),
Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2 are from

allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 662 and 681 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2022 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2. The Department may fund out of rank order high-quality applications to ensure that awards are evenly funded under each absolute priority. Applicants may apply under both absolute priorities but must submit two separate applications. Applicants must clearly identify if the proposed project addresses Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1: Interdisciplinary Preparation in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services for Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

Background:

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number and improve the quality of personnel who are fully credentialed to serve children, including infants, toddlers, and youth with disabilities, who have high-

intensity needs.¹ Under this priority, the Department will fund high-quality interdisciplinary² projects that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services³ personnel at the master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree levels for professional practice in a variety of education settings, including natural environments (the home and community settings in which children with and without disabilities participate), early learning programs, classrooms, schools, and distance learning environments. The competition will also prepare

¹ For the purposes of this priority, "high-intensity needs" refers to a complex array of disabilities (e.g., multiple disabilities, significant cognitive disabilities, significant physical disabilities, significant sensory disabilities, significant autism, significant emotional disabilities, or significant learning disabilities, including dyslexia) or the needs of children with these disabilities requiring intensive, individualized intervention(s) (i.e., that are specifically designed to address persistent learning or behavior difficulties, implemented with greater frequency and for an extended duration than is commonly available in a typical classroom or early intervention setting, or which require personnel to have knowledge and skills in identifying and implementing multiple evidence-based interventions).

² For the purposes of this priority, "interdisciplinary" refers to preparing scholars from two or more graduate degree programs in special education or early intervention and one or more related services through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences. Different graduate degree programs across more than one institution of higher education may partner to develop an interdisciplinary project.

For the purpose of this priority, "interdisciplinary" does not include: (a) individual scholars who receive two or more graduate degrees; (b) one graduate degree program that prepares scholars with different areas of focus; (c) one graduate degree program that offers interdisciplinary content but does not prepare scholars from two or more degree programs together; or (d) one graduate degree program in special education, early intervention, and related services partnering with a graduate degree program other than special education, early intervention, or related services. Programs in which scholars receive only a certificate or endorsement without a graduate degree are not eligible.

³ For the purposes of this priority, "related services" includes the following: speech-language pathology and audiology services; interpreting services; psychological services; applied behavior analysis; physical therapy and occupational therapy; recreation, including therapeutic recreation; social work services; counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling; and orientation and mobility services.

personnel who have the knowledge and skills to support each child with a disability who has high-intensity needs, in meeting high expectations and to partner with other providers, families, and administrators in meaningful and effective collaborations.

State demand for fully credentialed special education, early intervention, and related services personnel to serve children, including infants, toddlers, and youth, with disabilities exceeds the available supply, particularly in high-need schools⁴ (Boe et al., 2013). These shortages can negatively affect the quality of services provided to children, including infants, toddlers, and youth, with disabilities and their families (Boe et al., 2013). These shortages limit the field's ability to ensure that each child has the opportunity to meet challenging objectives and receive an education that addresses individualized needs and is both meaningful and appropriately ambitious, which is essential for preparing them for the future.

The need for personnel with the knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities, including infants, toddlers, and youth, who have high-intensity needs is even greater because specialized or advanced preparation is required to collaboratively design and deliver evidence-

⁴ For the purposes of this priority, "high-need school" refers to a public elementary or secondary school that is a "high-need local educational agency (LEA)," "high-poverty," "implementing a comprehensive support and improvement plan," or "implementing a targeted support and improvement plan" as defined in footnotes 9, 10, 11, and 12, respectively.

based⁵ instruction and intensive individualized intervention(s) in person and through distance learning technologies in natural environments, classrooms, and schools that address the needs of these individuals (Boe et al., 2013; Browder et al., 2014; McLeskey & Brownell, 2015).

Although children with disabilities, including infants, toddlers, and youth, who have high-intensity needs may require the combined expertise of numerous professionals (including special education, early intervention, and related services providers), it is often difficult for personnel from varied professional backgrounds to work together because they lack shared information, understanding, and experience. Personnel also need leadership skills to strengthen professional practice and cultural and linguistic competencies to effectively deliver services and education for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs, including those who are racially and ethnically diverse.

Interdisciplinary approaches to personnel preparation provide scholars with experience working and learning in team environments similar to those in which they are likely to work once employed (Smith, 2010). That is, when

⁵ For the purposes of this priority, “evidence-based” means, at a minimum, evidence that demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1), where a key project component included in the project’s logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

providing early intervention or special education services under IDEA, personnel serving children with disabilities, including infants, toddlers, and youth, work on interdisciplinary teams with parents, general and special education teachers, early interventionists, and related service providers with the expertise to design, implement, and evaluate instruction, intervention plans, individualized family service plans, and individualized education programs based on the unique learning and developmental needs of each child. To enable personnel to provide efficient, high-quality, integrated, and equitable services, both in person and through distance learning technologies, personnel preparation programs need to embed content, practices, and extensive field or clinical experiences into preservice training that is culturally and linguistically responsive and aligned with an interdisciplinary team-based approach to effectively meet the needs of children with high-intensity needs and their families in ways that are culturally and linguistically responsive. This priority aims to fund interdisciplinary projects that will provide such preparation.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number and improve the quality of personnel who are fully credentialed to serve children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities, who have high-

intensity needs--especially in areas of chronic personnel shortage. The priority will fund high-quality interdisciplinary projects that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services personnel at the master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree levels for professional practice in natural environments, early learning programs, classrooms, school settings, and in distance learning environments serving children, including infants and toddlers, and youth with disabilities.

Specifically, an applicant must propose an interdisciplinary project supporting scholars⁶ from two or more graduate degree programs in special education or early intervention and one or more related services.

An interdisciplinary project is a project that delivers core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field and

⁶ For the purposes of this priority, "scholar" is limited to an individual who: (a) is pursuing a master's, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral graduate degree in special education, early intervention, or related services (as defined in this notice); (b) receives scholarship assistance as authorized under section 662 of IDEA (34 CFR 304.3(g)); (c) will be eligible for a license, endorsement, or certification from a State or national credentialing authority following completion of the graduate degree program identified in the application; and (d) will be able to be employed in a position that serves children with disabilities for a minimum of 51 percent of their time or case load. See <https://pdp.ed.gov/OSEP/Home/Regulation> for more information.

Scholars from each graduate degree program participating in the proposed interdisciplinary project must receive scholar support and be eligible to fulfill service obligation requirements following graduate degree program completion. Scholars from each graduate degree program participating in this project must complete the requirements of their unique graduate degree program and receive different graduate degrees. Individuals pursuing degrees in general education or early childhood education do not qualify as "scholars" eligible for scholarship assistance.

clinical experiences as part of two or more master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree programs for scholars. Not all requirements (e.g., courses and field or clinical experiences) of each participating graduate degree program must be shared across all degree programs participating in the interdisciplinary project, but the interdisciplinary project must: (a) identify the competencies needed to promote high expectations and address the individualized needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs using an interdisciplinary approach to service delivery; (b) outline how the project will build capacity in those areas through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences for scholars supported by the proposed project; and (c) identify the aspects of each graduate degree program that are shared across all participating degree programs and those that remain unique to each.

Projects may include individuals who are not funded as scholars, but are in degree programs (e.g., general education, early childhood education, administration) that are cooperating with the applicant's proposed interdisciplinary project. These individuals may participate in the shared coursework, group assignments, extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences, and other opportunities required of scholars' program of

study (e.g., speaker series, monthly seminars) if doing so does not diminish the benefit for project-funded scholars (e.g., by reducing funds available for scholar support or limiting opportunities for scholars to participate in project activities).

Personnel preparation degree programs that prepare all scholars to be dually certified can qualify under this priority by partnering with at least one additional graduate degree program in related services.

Personnel preparation programs that prepare individuals to be educational interpreters for the deaf at the bachelor's degree level can qualify under this priority and are exempted from (a) the interdisciplinary requirement and (b) the requirement for two or more graduate degree programs. All other priority requirements specified for graduate programs will apply to the bachelor's program. While interdisciplinary projects are not required for educational interpreters, they are encouraged.

Focus Areas:

Within this absolute priority, the Secretary intends to support interdisciplinary projects under the following two focus areas: (A) Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs; and (B) Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

Applicants must identify the specific focus area (i.e., A or B) under which they are applying as part of the competition title on the application cover sheet (SF 424, line 12). Applicants may not submit the same proposal under more than one focus area. Applicants may submit different proposals in different focus areas.

Note: OSEP may fund out of rank order high-quality applications to ensure that projects are funded across both Focus Area A and Focus Area B.

Focus Area A: Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs. This focus area is for interdisciplinary projects that deliver core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences for scholars across two or more graduate degree programs in early intervention or early childhood special education and one or more related services for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children with disabilities or developmental delays who have high-intensity needs.

Early intervention personnel are those who are prepared to provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to three, and early childhood personnel are those who are prepared to provide services to children with disabilities ages three through five (and in States where the age range is other than ages three through

five, we defer to the State's certification for early childhood special education). In States where certification in early intervention is combined with certification in early childhood special education, applicants may propose a combined early intervention and early childhood special education personnel preparation project under this focus area.

Focus Area B: Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities who have High-Intensity Needs.

This focus area is for interdisciplinary projects that deliver core content through shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences to scholars across two or more graduate degree programs in special education and one or more related services for school-age children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

Focus Areas A and B:

Applicants may use up to the first 12 months of the performance period and up to \$100,000 of the first budget period for planning without enrolling scholars. Applicants must clearly provide sufficient justification for requesting program planning time and include the goals, objectives, and intended outcomes of program planning in year one, a description of the proposed strategies and activities to be supported, and a timeline for the work. A

description of the proposed strategies may include activities such as--

(1) Outlining or updating coursework, group assignments, or extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences needed to support culturally and linguistically responsive, interdisciplinary preparation for special education, early intervention, or related services personnel serving children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(2) Building capacity (e.g., hiring of a field supervisor, providing professional development for field supervisors, and training for faculty);

(3) Purchasing needed resources (e.g., additional teaching supplies or specialized equipment to enhance instruction); or

(4) Establishing relationships with programs or schools, including those with racially and ethnically diverse populations, to serve as sites for field or clinical experiences needed to support delivery of the proposed interdisciplinary project.

Additional Federal funds may be requested for scholar support and other grant activities occurring in year one of the project, provided that the total request for year one does not exceed the maximum award available for one budget period of 12 months (i.e., \$250,000).

Note: Applicants proposing projects to develop, expand, or add a new area of emphasis to special education, early intervention, or related services programs must provide, in their applications, information on how these new areas will be sustained in their programs once Federal funding ends.

Note: Project periods under this priority may be up to 60 months. Projects should be designed to ensure that all proposed scholars successfully complete the program within 60 months of the start of the project. The Secretary may reduce continuation awards for any project in which scholars are not on track to complete the program by the end of that period.

To be considered for funding under this absolute priority, all program applicants must meet the requirements contained in this priority.

To meet the requirements of this priority an applicant must--

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance," how--

(1) The project addresses national, State, regional, or district shortages of personnel who are fully qualified to serve children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs in the focus area under which the project is applying. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Present data for all scholars in the program and provide disaggregated data for scholars of color that reflects the quality of each special education, early intervention, or related services personnel preparation degree program participating in the project, in areas such as: the average amount of time it takes for scholars to complete the program; the percentage of program graduates who receive a license, endorsement, or certification related to special education, related services, or early intervention services; the percentage of program graduates finding employment related to their preparation after graduation; the effectiveness of program graduates in providing special education, early intervention, or related services, which could include data on the learning and developmental outcomes of children with disabilities they serve; the percentage of program graduates who maintain employment for two or more years in the area for which they were prepared; and the percentage of employers who rate the preparation of scholars who complete their degree program as adequate or higher; and

(ii) If available for the degree programs participating in the proposed project, present data on the quality of their interdisciplinary approaches to the preparation of special education, early intervention, or related services personnel; and

Note: Data on the quality of a personnel preparation program should be no older than five years prior to the start date of the project proposed in the application. When reporting percentages, the denominator (i.e., total number of scholars or program graduates) must be provided.

(2) The project will increase the number of personnel who demonstrate the competencies⁷ needed to--

(i) Promote high expectations and improve outcomes for children with disabilities;

(ii) Differentiate curriculum and instruction;

(iii) Provide intensive, evidence-based individualized instruction and intervention(s);

(iv) Provide culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and services;

(v) Provide instruction or intervention(s) in person and through distance learning technologies;

(vi) Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, using an interdisciplinary team-based approach to address the individualized needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs, ages birth through 21, and designed to achieve improvements in learning or

⁷ For the purposes of this priority, "competencies" means what a person knows and can do--the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively function in a role (National Professional Development Center on Inclusion, 2011). These competencies should ensure that personnel are able to use challenging academic standards, child achievement and functional standards, and assessments to improve instructional practices, services, learning and developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral), and college- and career-readiness of children with disabilities.

developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral), and support the successful transition from early childhood to elementary, elementary to secondary, or transition to postsecondary education and the workforce; and

(vii) Exercise leadership to improve professional practice and services and education for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs.

To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(A) Identify the competencies that special education, early intervention, or related services personnel need to--

(1) Promote high expectations and improve outcomes for children with disabilities;

(2) Differentiate curriculum and instruction;

(3) Provide intensive, evidence-based individualized instruction and intervention(s);

(4) Provide culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and services;

(5) Provide instruction or intervention(s) in person and through distance learning technologies;

(6) Collaborate with parents, families, and diverse stakeholders, including those who are from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, using an interdisciplinary team-based approach designed to improve learning and developmental outcomes; ensure access to and progress in academic achievement standards or alternate academic

achievement standards, as appropriate; lead to successful transition to college and career for children with disabilities, including children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; and maximize the use of effective technology, including assistive technology, to deliver instruction, interventions, and services; and

(7) Exercise leadership to improve professional practice and services and education for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs and their families;

(B) Identify the competencies needed by members of interdisciplinary teams to promote high expectations and improve early childhood, educational, and employment outcomes for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(C) Identify the competencies that personnel need to support inclusion of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs in the least restrictive and natural environments to the maximum extent appropriate by intentionally promoting high expectations and participation in learning and social activities to foster development, learning, academic achievement, friendships with peers, and sense of belonging;

(D) Identify how scholars will be prepared to develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based instruction and evidence-based interventions delivered in person and

through distance learning technologies that improve outcomes for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs in a variety of settings (e.g., natural environments; public schools, including charter schools; private schools; and other nonpublic education settings, including home education); and

(E) Provide a conceptual framework for the proposed interdisciplinary personnel preparation project, including any empirical support for project activities designed to promote the acquisition of the identified competencies (see paragraph (a)(2) of the requirements for this priority) needed by special education, early intervention, or related services personnel, and how these competencies relate to the proposed project.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of project services," how the project--

(1) Will conduct its planning activities, if the applicant will use any of the allowable first 12 months of the project period for planning;

(2) Will recruit and retain high-quality scholars into each of the graduate degree programs participating in the project and ensure equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on

race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) Criteria the applicant will use to identify high-quality applicants for admission into each of the graduate degree programs participating in the project;

(ii) Recruitment strategies the applicant will use to attract high-quality applicants, including specific recruitment strategies targeting high-quality applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups, including underrepresented people of color and individuals with disabilities; and

(iii) The approach, including mentoring, monitoring, and accommodations, the applicant will use to support scholars to complete their respective degree programs;

(3) Reflects current evidence-based practices, including practices in the areas of literacy and numeracy development, assessment, behavior, instructional practices, distance learning technologies and pedagogy, and inclusive strategies, as appropriate, and is designed to prepare scholars in the identified competencies. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how the project will--

(i) Incorporate current evidence-based practices (including relevant research citations) that improve outcomes for children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs into (a) the required coursework and

extensive field or clinical experiences for each graduate degree program participating in the project; and (b) the shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences required for the interdisciplinary portions of the project; and

(ii) Use evidence-based professional development practices for adult learners to instruct scholars through both in-person and online courses and field or clinical experiences;

(4) Is of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to prepare scholars in the identified competencies. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) The components of (a) each graduate degree program participating in the project; and (b) the shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences required for the interdisciplinary portions of the proposed project will support scholars' acquisition and enhancement of the identified competencies;

(ii) The components of (a) each graduate degree program participating in the project; and (b) the shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences required for the interdisciplinary portions of the proposed project will be integrated to allow scholars, in collaboration with other team members, to use their knowledge and skills in

designing, implementing, and evaluating practices supported by evidence to address the learning and developmental needs of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

(iii) Scholars will be provided with ongoing guidance and feedback during training; and

(iv) The proposed project will provide ongoing induction opportunities and mentoring support to graduates of each graduate degree program participating in the project;

(5) Will engage in meaningful and effective collaboration with appropriate partners representing diverse stakeholders, including--

(i) High-need schools, which may include high-need local educational agencies (LEAs),⁸ high-poverty schools,⁹ schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement,¹⁰ and schools implementing a targeted support

⁸ For the purposes of this priority, "high-need LEA" means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

⁹ For the purposes of this priority, "high-poverty school" means a school in which at least 50 percent of students are from low-income families as determined using one of the measures of poverty specified under section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). For middle and high schools, eligibility may be calculated on the basis of comparable data from feeder schools. Eligibility as a high-poverty school under this definition is determined on the basis of the most currently available data.

¹⁰ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a comprehensive support and improvement plan" means a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement by a State under section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the ESEA that includes (a) not less than the lowest performing 5 percent of all schools in the State receiving funds under Title I, Part A of the ESEA; (b) all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students; and (c) public schools in the State described under section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(II) of the ESEA.

and improvement plan¹¹ for children with disabilities; early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographic boundaries of a high-need LEA; and early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographical boundaries of an LEA serving the highest percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement or implementing targeted support and improvement plans in the State. The purpose of these partnerships is to provide extensive field or clinical practice for scholars aimed at developing the identified competencies as members of interdisciplinary teams; and

(ii) Other personnel preparation programs on campus or at partnering universities for the purpose of sharing resources, supporting program development and delivery, and addressing personnel shortages;

(6) Will use technology, as appropriate, to promote scholar learning and professional practice, enhance the efficiency of the project, collaborate with partners, and facilitate ongoing mentoring and support for scholars;

(7) Will ensure that scholars understand how to use technology to support children's in-person and distance learning and children's use of educational and assistive technology; and

¹¹ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a targeted support and improvement plan" means a school identified for targeted support and improvement by a State that has developed and is implementing a school-level targeted support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes based on the indicators in the statewide accountability system as defined in section 1111(d)(2) of the ESEA.

(8) Will align with and use resources, as appropriate, available through technical assistance centers, which may include centers funded by the Department;

Note: Use the "Find a Center or Grant" link at <https://osepideasthatwork.org> for information about OSEP-funded technical assistance centers.

(c) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," how--

(1) The applicant will use comprehensive and appropriate methodologies to evaluate how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project have been met, including the project processes and outcomes;

(2) The applicant will collect, analyze, and use data related to specific and measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes of the project. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) Scholar competencies and other project processes and outcomes will be measured for formative evaluation purposes, including proposed instruments, data collection methods, and possible analyses; and

(ii) It will collect and analyze data on the quality of services provided by scholars who complete the graduate degree programs involved in this interdisciplinary project and are employed in the field for which they were trained, including data on the learning and developmental outcomes

(e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral, meeting college- and career-ready standards), and on growth toward these outcomes, of the children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs;

Note: Following the completion of the project period, grantees are encouraged to engage in ongoing data collection activities.

(3) The methods of evaluation will produce quantitative and qualitative data for objective performance measures that are related to the outcomes of the proposed project; and

(4) The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and allow for periodic assessment of progress towards meeting the project outcomes. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) Results of the evaluation will be used to improve the proposed project to prepare special education, early intervention, or related services personnel to provide (a) focused instruction; and (b) intensive individualized intervention(s) in an interdisciplinary team-based approach to improve outcomes of children with disabilities who have high-intensity needs; and

(ii) The grantee will report the evaluation results to OSEP in its annual and final performance reports.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative under "Project Assurances" or in the applicable appendices, that the

following program requirements are met. The applicant must--

(1) Provide scholar support for participants from two or more graduate degree programs partnering in the proposed interdisciplinary personnel preparation project.

Consistent with 34 CFR 304.30, each scholar must (a) receive support for no less than one academic year, and (b) be eligible to fulfill service obligation requirements following degree program completion. Funding across degree programs may be applied differently;

(2) Include in Appendix B of the application--

(i) Table(s) that summarize the required program of study for each degree program that clearly delineate the shared coursework, group assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences required of all project scholars to support interdisciplinary practice;

(ii) Course syllabi for all coursework in the major of each degree program and all shared courses, group assignments, and extensive coordinated field or clinical experiences required of project scholars; and

(iii) Learning outcomes for proposed coursework;

(3) Ensure that a comprehensive set of completed syllabi, including syllabi created or revised as part of a project planning year, are submitted to OSEP by the end of year one of the grant;

(4) Ensure that efforts to recruit a diverse range of scholars, including diversity of race, ethnicity, or national origin, are consistent with applicable law. For instance, grantees may engage in focused outreach and recruitment to increase the diversity of the applicant pool prior to the selection of scholars;

(5) Ensure that the project will meet all requirements in 34 CFR 304.23, particularly those related to (a) informing all scholarship recipients of their service obligation commitment and (b) disbursing scholar support. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements would be a violation of the grant award that could result in sanctions, including the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department;

(6) Ensure that prior approval from the OSEP project officer will be obtained before admitting additional scholars beyond the number of scholars proposed in the application and before transferring a scholar to another OSEP-funded grant;

(7) Ensure that the project will meet the statutory requirements in section 662(e) through (h) of IDEA;

(8) Ensure that at least 65 percent of the total award over the project period (i.e., up to 5 years) will be used for scholar support. Applicants proposing to use year one for program development may budget for less than 65 percent of the total requested budget over the 5 years for

scholar support; such applicants must ensure that 65 percent of the total award minus funds allocated for program development will be used for scholar support;

(9) Ensure that the institution of higher education (IHE) at which scholars are enrolled in the program will not require those scholars to work (e.g., as graduate assistants) as a condition of receiving support (e.g., tuition, stipends) from the proposed project, unless the work is specifically related to the acquisition of scholars' competencies or the requirements for completion of their personnel preparation program. This prohibition on work as a condition of receiving support does not apply to the service obligation requirements in section 662(h) of IDEA;

(10) Ensure that scholar support costs (e.g., tuition, stipends) are scholarship assistance and not financial assistance based on the condition that the scholar works for the grantee (e.g., as graduate assistants);

(11) Ensure that the budget includes attendance of the project director at a three-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC during each year of the project. The project must reallocate funds for travel to the project directors' meeting no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period if the meeting is conducted virtually;

(12) Ensure that the project director, key personnel, and, as appropriate, scholars will actively participate in the cross-project collaboration, advanced trainings, and cross-site learning opportunities (e.g., webinars, briefings) organized by OSEP. This network will be used to build capacity of participants, increase the impact of funding, and promote innovative and interdisciplinary service delivery models across projects;

(13) Ensure that if the project maintains a website, relevant information and documents are in a format that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility; and

(14) Ensure that annual data will be submitted on each scholar who receives grant support (OMB Control Number 1820-0686). The primary purposes of the data collection are to track the service obligation fulfillment of scholars who receive funds from OSEP grants and to collect data for program performance measure reporting under 34 CFR 75.110. Applicants are encouraged to visit the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System (DCS) website at <https://pdp.ed.gov/osep> for further information about this data collection requirement. Typically, data collection begins in January of each year, and grantees are notified by email about the data collection period for their grant, although grantees may submit data as needed, year round. This data collection must be submitted electronically by

the grantee and does not supplant the annual grant performance report required of each grantee for continuation funding (see 34 CFR 75.590). Data collection includes the submission of a signed, completed Pre-Scholarship Agreement and Exit Certification for each scholar funded under an OSEP grant (see paragraph (5) of these requirements).

Absolute Priority 2: Preparation of Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Personnel Attending Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPISIs).

Background:

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number of ethnically and racially diverse personnel who are fully credentialed to serve children, including infants, toddlers, and youth with disabilities. Under this absolute priority, the Department will fund high-quality projects within MSIs¹² that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services¹³ personnel at the

¹² For the purposes of this priority, "minority serving institutions" are institutions of higher education whose enrollment of a single minority or a combination of minorities exceeds 50 percent of the total enrollment (20 U.S.C. 1067k(3)).

¹³ For the purposes of this priority, "related services" includes the following: speech-language pathology and audiology services; interpreting services; psychological services; applied behavior analysis; physical therapy and occupational therapy; recreation,

certification,¹⁴ bachelor's degree, master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree levels to serve in a variety of settings, including natural environments (the home and community settings in which children with and without disabilities participate), early learning programs, child care, classrooms, schools, and distance learning.

Children of color represent a large proportion of the children receiving early intervention and special education services through IDEA. In 2019, approximately 50 percent of infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through two are children of color; approximately 48 percent of preschool children with disabilities ages three through five are children of color; while approximately 54 percent of students with disabilities, ages five (in kindergarten) through 21 are children of color (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Despite the fact that children of color make up an increasing share of all children receiving early intervention and special education services, results from the 2017-18 National Teacher and Principal Survey show that teachers of color comprised about 20 percent of the public

including therapeutic recreation; social work services; counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling; and orientation and mobility services.

¹⁴ For the purpose of this priority, "certification" refers to programs of study that lead to State licensure, endorsement, or certification that qualifies graduates to teach or provide services to children with disabilities. Programs of study that lead to a certificate of completion from the MSI, but do not lead to State licensure, endorsement, or certification, do not qualify.

school teacher workforce, which is disproportionately low compared to the proportion of students of color enrolled in public schools (Taie & Goldring, 2020).

Moreover, the demographics of personnel entering the early intervention and special education fields are not aligned with the demographics of the children and families served under IDEA. OSEP's Personnel Development Program Data Collection System data reveals that scholars are more likely to be White. Specifically, the race/ethnicity of scholars obtaining a graduate degree to serve children with disabilities is 62 percent White, 14 percent Hispanic, 9 percent Black, and 3 percent Asian. Similarly, data from related services professional organizations reveal that the majority of those enrolled in related service personnel preparation programs are White with demonstrably smaller percentages of scholars of color enrolled in preservice programs (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2020; American Physical Therapy Association, 2020; American Speech-Language Hearing Association, 2021). The data clearly demonstrates that there is a substantial shortage of ethnically and racially diverse special education, early intervention, and related services providers (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

This is of concern, as research indicates that increasing the diversity of personnel can have positive impacts on all children, and this is especially true for

children of color who demonstrate improved academic achievement and behavioral and social-emotional development when they are taught by teachers of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

To address the need for a more diverse workforce, this priority aims to fund projects at MSIs that will prepare personnel in special education, early intervention, or a related service at the certification, bachelor's degree, master's degree, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctorate degree level.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to increase the number of ethnically and racially diverse personnel who have the necessary knowledge and skills to become fully credentialed to serve children, including infants, toddlers, and youth, with disabilities. The priority will support high-quality projects in MSIs that prepare special education, early intervention, and related services scholars¹⁵ at the certification, bachelor's degree, master's degree,

¹⁵ For the purposes of this priority, "scholar" is limited to an individual who: (a) is pursuing a certification, bachelor's master's, educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral graduate degree in special education, early intervention, or related services (as defined in this notice); (b) receives scholarship assistance as authorized under section 662 of IDEA (34 CFR 304.3(g)); (c) will be eligible for a license, endorsement, or certification from a State or national credentialing authority following completion of the program of study identified in the application; and (d) will be able to be employed in a position that serves children with disabilities for a minimum of 51 percent of their time or case load. See <https://pdp.ed.gov/OSEP/Home/Regulation> for more information.

Individuals pursuing degrees in general education or early childhood education do not qualify as "scholars" eligible for scholarship assistance.

educational specialist degree, or clinical doctoral degree levels for professional practice in natural environments, early learning programs, classrooms, school settings, and in distance learning environments serving children, including infants, toddlers, and youth, with disabilities.

Focus Areas:

Within this absolute priority, the Secretary intends to support projects under the following two focus areas:

(A) Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities; and (B) Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities. Applicants must identify the specific focus area (i.e., A or B) under which they are applying as part of the competition title on the application cover sheet (SF 424, line 12). Applicants may not submit the same proposal under more than one focus area. Applicants may submit different proposals in different focus areas. OSEP may fund out of rank order high-quality applications to ensure that projects are funded across both Focus Area A and Focus Area B.

Focus Area A: Preparing Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschool-Age Children with Disabilities.

This focus area is for projects that prepare early intervention, special education, and related services personnel who are prepared to provide services to infants and toddler with disabilities ages birth to two, and those

who are prepared to provide services to children with disabilities ages three through five (and in States where the age range is other than ages three through five, we defer to the State's certification for early childhood special education). In States where certification in early intervention is combined with certification in early childhood special education, applicants may propose a combined early intervention and early childhood special education personnel preparation project under this focus area.

Focus Area B: Preparing Personnel to Serve School-Age Children with Disabilities. This focus area is for projects that prepare special education and related services personnel to work with school-age children.

Focus Areas A and B:

Applicants may use up to the first 12 months of the performance period and up to \$100,000 of the first budget period for planning without enrolling scholars. Applicants must clearly provide sufficient justification for requesting program planning time and include the goals, objectives, and intended outcomes of program planning in year one, a description of the proposed strategies and activities to be supported, and a timeline for the work. A description of the proposed strategies may include activities such as--

(1) Outlining or updating coursework, assignments, or extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences needed to support preparation for special education, early intervention, or related services personnel serving children with disabilities;

(2) Building capacity (e.g., hiring of a field supervisor, providing professional development for field supervisors, and training for faculty);

(3) Purchasing needed resources (e.g., additional teaching supplies or specialized equipment to enhance instruction); or

(4) Establishing relationships with programs or schools to serve as sites for field or clinical experiences needed to support delivery of the proposed project.

Additional Federal funds may be requested for scholar support and other grant activities occurring in year one of the project, provided that the total request for year one does not exceed the maximum award available for one budget period of 12 months (i.e., \$250,000).

Note: Applicants proposing projects to develop, expand, or add a new area of emphasis to early intervention, special education, or related services programs must provide, in their applications, information on how these new areas will be sustained in their programs once Federal funding ends.

Note: Project periods under this priority may be up to 60 months. Projects should be designed to ensure that all

proposed scholars successfully complete the program within 60 months of the start of the project. The Secretary may reduce continuation awards for any project in which scholars are not on track to complete the program by the end of that period.

To be considered for funding under this absolute priority, all program applicants must meet the requirements contained in this priority.

To meet the requirements of this priority an applicant must--

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance," how--

(1) The project addresses national, State, regional, or district shortages of personnel who are fully qualified to serve children with disabilities in the focus area under which the project is applying. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Present data for all scholars in the program and provide disaggregated data for scholars of color that reflects the quality of the special education, early intervention, or related services personnel preparation degree program participating in the project, in areas such as: the average amount of time it takes for scholars to complete the program; the percentage of program graduates who receive a license, endorsement, or certification related to special education, related services, or early

intervention services; the percentage of program graduates finding employment related to their preparation after graduation; the effectiveness of program graduates in providing special education, early intervention, or related services, which could include data on the learning and developmental outcomes of children with disabilities they serve; the percentage of program graduates who maintain employment for two or more years in the area for which they were prepared; and the percentage of employers who rate the preparation of scholars who complete their degree program as adequate or higher; and

(ii) Present data on the quality of the pedagogical approach to the preparation of special education, early intervention, or related services personnel; and

Note: Data on the quality of a personnel preparation program should be no older than five years prior to the start date of the project proposed in the application. When reporting percentages, the denominator (i.e., total number of scholars or program graduates) must be provided.

(2) The project will increase the number of personnel, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, who demonstrate the competencies¹⁶ needed to--

¹⁶ For the purposes of this priority, "competencies" means what a person knows and can do--the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively function in a role (National Professional Development Center on Inclusion, 2011). These competencies should ensure that personnel are able to use challenging academic standards, child

- (i) Promote high expectations and improve outcomes for children with disabilities;
- (ii) Differentiate curriculum and instruction;
- (iii) Provide individualized, evidence-based instruction and intervention(s);
- (iv) Provide culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and services;
- (v) Provide instruction or intervention(s) in person and through distance learning technologies;
- (vi) Collaborate with diverse stakeholders, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, to address the individualized needs of children with disabilities, ages birth through 21, and designed to achieve improvements in learning or developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral), and support the successful transition from early childhood to elementary, elementary to secondary, or transition to postsecondary education and the workforce; and
- (vii) Exercise leadership to improve professional practice and services and education for children with disabilities, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. To address this requirement, the applicant must--

achievement and functional standards, and assessments to improve instructional practices, services, learning and developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral), and college- and career-readiness of children with disabilities.

(A) Identify the competencies that special education, early intervention, or related services personnel need to--

(1) Promote high expectations and improve outcomes for children with disabilities;

(2) Differentiate curriculum and instruction;

(3) Provide individualized, evidence-based instruction and intervention(s);

(4) Provide culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and services;

(5) Provide instruction or intervention(s) in person and through distance learning technologies;

(6) Collaborate with parents, families, and stakeholders, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, to improve learning and developmental outcomes; ensure access to, and progress in, academic achievement standards or alternate academic achievement standards, as appropriate; lead to successful transition to college and career for children with disabilities; and maximize the use of effective technology, including assistive technology, to deliver instruction, interventions, and services; and

(7) Exercise leadership to improve professional practice and services and education for children with disabilities, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds;

(B) Identify the competencies that personnel need to support inclusion of children with disabilities in the least restrictive and natural environments to the maximum extent appropriate by intentionally promoting high expectations and participation in learning and social activities to foster development, learning, academic achievement, friendships with peers, and sense of belonging;

(C) Identify how scholars will be prepared to develop, implement, and evaluate evidence-based instruction and evidence-based interventions delivered in person and through distance learning technologies that improve outcomes for children with disabilities, including those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds, in a variety of settings (e.g., natural environments; public schools, including charter schools; private schools; and other nonpublic education settings, including home education); and

(D) Provide a conceptual framework for the proposed personnel preparation project, including any empirical support for project activities designed to promote the acquisition of the identified competencies (see paragraph (a)(2) of the requirements for this priority) needed by special education, early intervention, or related services personnel, and how these competencies relate to the proposed project;

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of project services," how the project--

(1) Will recruit and retain high-quality scholars into the program and ensure equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) Criteria the applicant will use to identify high-quality applicants for admission into the programs;

(ii) Recruitment strategies the applicant will use to attract high-quality applicants, including specific recruitment strategies targeting high-quality applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups, including underrepresented people of color and individuals with disabilities; and

(iii) The approach, including necessary supports and services that improve graduation rates such as, but not limited to, culturally and linguistically responsive mentoring and counseling, explicit strategies and support for standardized test taking (e.g., Praxis tests), monitoring, and accommodations, the applicant will use to support scholars to complete their program of study;

(2) Will reflect current culturally and linguistically competent evidence-based practices,

including practices in the areas of early learning and development, literacy and numeracy development, assessment, behavior, instructional practices, distance learning technologies and pedagogy, and inclusive strategies, as appropriate, and is designed to prepare scholars in the identified competencies. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how the project will--

- (i) Incorporate current culturally and linguistically competent evidence-based practices (including relevant research citations) that improve outcomes for children with disabilities into the required coursework and extensive field or clinical experiences for the program; and

- (ii) Use culturally and linguistically competent evidence-based professional development practices for adult learners to instruct scholars through both in-person and online courses and field or clinical experiences;

- (3) Is of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to prepare scholars in the identified competencies. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

- (i) The components of the program of study, including the coursework, assignments, and extensive and coordinated field or clinical experiences required for the proposed project, will support scholars' acquisition and enhancement of the identified competencies;

- (ii) The components of the program of study will be integrated to allow scholars to use their knowledge and

skills in designing, implementing, and evaluating practices supported by evidence to address the learning and developmental needs of children with disabilities;

(iii) Scholars will be provided with ongoing culturally and linguistically responsive guidance, mentoring, feedback, and other necessary supports during training; and

(iv) The proposed project will provide ongoing culturally and linguistically responsive induction opportunities and mentoring support to graduates of the project;

(4) Will engage in meaningful and effective collaboration with appropriate partners representing diverse stakeholders, including--

(i) High-need schools, which may include high-need LEAs,¹⁷ high-poverty schools,¹⁸ schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement,¹⁹ and schools

¹⁷ For the purposes of this priority, "high-need LEA" means an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

¹⁸ For the purposes of this priority, "high-poverty school" means a school in which at least 50 percent of students are from low-income families as determined using one of the measures of poverty specified under section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). For middle and high schools, eligibility may be calculated on the basis of comparable data from feeder schools. Eligibility as a high-poverty school under this definition is determined on the basis of the most currently available data.

¹⁹ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a comprehensive support and improvement plan" means a school identified for comprehensive support and improvement by a State under section 1111(c)(4)(D) of the ESEA that includes (a) not less than the lowest performing 5 percent of all schools in the State receiving funds under Title I, Part A of the ESEA; (b) all public high schools in the State failing to graduate one third or more of their students; and (c) public schools in the State described under section 1111(d)(3)(A)(i)(II) of the ESEA.

implementing a targeted support and improvement plan²⁰ for children with disabilities; early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographic boundaries of a high-need LEA; and early childhood and early intervention programs located within the geographical boundaries of an LEA serving the highest percentage of schools identified for comprehensive support and improvement or implementing targeted support and improvement plans in the State. The purpose of these partnerships is to provide extensive field or clinical practice for scholars aimed at developing the identified competencies; and

(ii) Other personnel preparation programs on campus or at partnering universities for the purpose of sharing resources, supporting program development and delivery, and addressing personnel shortages;

(5) Will use technology, as appropriate, to promote scholar learning and professional practice, enhance the efficiency of the project, collaborate with partners, and facilitate ongoing culturally and linguistically responsive mentoring and support for scholars;

(6) Will ensure that scholars understand how to use technology to support children's in-person and distance

²⁰ For the purposes of this priority, "school implementing a targeted support and improvement plan" means a school identified for targeted support and improvement by a State that has developed and is implementing a school-level targeted support and improvement plan to improve student outcomes based on the indicators in the statewide accountability system as defined in section 1111(d)(2) of the ESEA.

learning and children's use of educational and assistive technology; and

(7) Will align with and use resources, as appropriate, available through technical assistance centers, which may include centers funded by the Department;

Note: Use the "Find a Center or Grant" link at <https://osepideasthatwork.org> for information about OSEP-funded technical assistance centers.

(c) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," how--

(1) The applicant will use comprehensive and appropriate methodologies to evaluate how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project have been met, including the project processes and outcomes;

(2) The applicant will collect, analyze, and use data related to specific and measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes of the project. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) Scholar competencies and other project processes and outcomes will be measured for formative evaluation purposes, including proposed instruments, data collection methods, and possible analyses; and

(ii) It will collect and analyze data on the quality of services provided by scholars who complete the degree program and are employed in the field for which they were

trained, including data on the learning and developmental outcomes (e.g., academic, social, emotional, behavioral, meeting college- and career-ready standards), and on growth toward these outcomes, of the children with disabilities served by the scholars;

Note: Following the completion of the project period, grantees are encouraged to engage in ongoing data collection activities.

(3) The methods of evaluation will produce quantitative and qualitative data for objective performance measures that are related to the outcomes of the proposed project; and

(4) The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and allow for periodic assessment of progress towards meeting the project outcomes. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe how--

(i) Results of the evaluation will be used to improve the proposed project to prepare special education, early intervention, or related services personnel to provide (a) focused instruction; and (b) individualized intervention(s) to improve outcomes of children with disabilities; and

(ii) The grantee will report the evaluation results to OSEP in its annual and final performance reports;

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative under "Project Assurances" or in the applicable appendices, that the

following program requirements are met. The applicant must--

(1) Provide scholar support for participants.

Consistent with 34 CFR 304.30, each scholar must (a) receive support for no less than one academic year, and (b) be eligible to fulfill service obligation requirements following degree program completion. Funding across degree programs may be applied differently;

(2) Include in Appendix B of the application--

(i) Course syllabi for all coursework in the program, assignments, and extensive coordinated field or clinical experiences required of project scholars; and

(ii) Intended learning outcomes for the proposed coursework;

(3) Ensure that a comprehensive set of completed syllabi, including syllabi created or revised as part of a project planning year, are submitted to OSEP by the end of year one of the grant;

(4) Ensure that efforts to recruit a diverse range of scholars, including diversity of race, ethnicity, or national origin, are consistent with applicable law. For instance, grantees may engage in focused outreach and recruitment to increase the diversity of the applicant pool prior to the selection of scholars;

(5) Ensure that the project will meet all requirements in 34 CFR 304.23, particularly those related

to (a) informing all scholarship recipients of their service obligation commitment and (b) disbursing scholar support. Failure by a grantee to properly meet these requirements would be a violation of the grant award that could result in sanctions, including the grantee being liable for returning any misused funds to the Department;

(6) Ensure that prior approval from the OSEP project officer will be obtained before admitting additional scholars beyond the number of scholars proposed in the application and before transferring a scholar to another OSEP-funded grant;

(7) Ensure that the project will meet the statutory requirements in section 662(e) through (h) of IDEA;

(8) Ensure that at least 65 percent of the total award over the project period (i.e., up to 5 years) will be used for scholar support. Applicants proposing to use year one for program development may budget for less than 65 percent of the total requested budget over the 5 years for scholar support; such applicants must ensure that 65 percent of the total award minus funds allocated for program development will be used for scholar support;

(9) Ensure that the IHE at which scholars are enrolled in the program will not require those scholars to work (e.g., as graduate assistants) as a condition of receiving support (e.g., tuition, stipends) from the proposed project, unless the work is specifically related

to the acquisition of scholars' competencies or the requirements for completion of their personnel preparation program. This prohibition on work as a condition of receiving support does not apply to the service obligation requirements in section 662(h) of IDEA;

(10) Ensure that scholar support costs (e.g., tuition, stipends) are scholarship assistance and not financial assistance based on the condition that the scholar work (e.g., as graduate assistants);

(11) Ensure that the budget includes attendance of the project director at a three-day project directors' meeting in Washington, DC during each year of the project. The project must reallocate funds for travel to the project directors' meeting no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period if the meeting is conducted virtually;

(12) Ensure that the project director, key personnel, and, as appropriate, scholars will actively participate in cross-project collaboration opportunities, advanced trainings, and other learning opportunities (e.g., webinars, briefings) organized by OSEP. This network will be used to build capacity of participants, increase the impact of funding, and promote innovative service delivery models;

(13) Ensure that if the project maintains a website, relevant information and documents are in a format that

meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility; and

(14) Ensure that annual data will be submitted on each scholar who receives grant support (OMB Control Number 1820-0686). The primary purposes of the data collection are to track the service obligation fulfillment of scholars who receive funds from OSEP grants and to collect data for program performance measure reporting under 34 CFR 75.110. Applicants are encouraged to visit the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System (DCS) website at <https://pdp.ed.gov/osep> for further information about this data collection requirement. Typically, data collection begins in January of each year, and grantees are notified by email about the data collection period for their grant, although grantees may submit data as needed, year round. This data collection must be submitted electronically by the grantee and does not supplant the annual grant performance report required of each grantee for continuation funding (see 34 CFR 75.590). Data collection includes the submission of a signed, completed Pre-Scholarship Agreement and Exit Certification for each scholar funded under an OSEP grant (see paragraph (5) of these requirements).

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tables/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/static-tables/index.html).

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative
Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally
offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on
proposed priorities. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however,
makes the public comment requirements of the APA
inapplicable to the priorities in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1462 and 1481.

Note: Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a
manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements
contained in Federal civil rights laws.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department
General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77,
79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of
Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on
Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in
2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of
the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform
Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit

Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 304.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$250,000,000 for the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program for FY 2022, of which we intend to use an estimated \$9,500,000 for this competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2023 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$200,000-\$250,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$225,000 per year.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award exceeding \$250,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

Estimated Number of Awards: 38.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: For Absolute Priority 1, eligible applicants are IHEs and private nonprofit organizations. For Absolute Priority 2, eligible applicants are MSIs and private nonprofit organizations.

Note: If you are a nonprofit organization, under 34 CFR 75.51, you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

2. a. Cost Sharing or Matching: Cost sharing or matching is not required for this competition.

b. Indirect Cost Rate Information: This program uses a training indirect cost rate. This limits indirect cost reimbursement to an entity's actual indirect costs, as determined in its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or eight percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For more information regarding training indirect cost rates, see 34 CFR 75.562. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

c. Administrative Cost Limitation: This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

3. Subgrantees: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application. Under 34 CFR 75.708(e), a grantee may contract for supplies, equipment, and other services in accordance with 2 CFR part 200.

4. Other General Requirements:

a. Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA) .

b. Applicants for, and recipients of, funding must, with respect to the aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA) .

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 27, 2021 (86 FR 73264) and available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on February 13, 2019, and, in part, describe the transition from the requirement to register in SAM.gov a DUNS number to the implementation of the UEI. More information on the phase-out of DUNS numbers is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ofo/docs/unique-entity-identifier-transition-fact-sheet.pdf>.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

3. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 50 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the

abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) Significance (10 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated; and

(ii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

(b) Quality of project services (45 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In determining the quality of the project services, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;

(ii) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services;

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services; and

(iv) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field.

(c) Quality of the project evaluation (25 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible; and

(iv) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

(d) Quality of project personnel, quality of the management plan, and adequacy of resources (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the project personnel, the quality of the management plan, and the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are

members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;

(ii) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project;

(iv) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization; and

(v) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance

of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:

In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of

applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, the Secretary may impose specific conditions, and under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity

and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

6. In General: In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with--

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or

equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115–232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(d) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific

conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. Performance Measures: For the purposes of Department reporting under 34 CFR 75.110, the Department has established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program. These measures include (1) the percentage of preparation programs that incorporate scientifically or evidence-based practices into their curricula; (2) the percentage of scholars completing the preparation program who are knowledgeable and skilled in evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for children

with disabilities; (3) the percentage of scholars who exit the preparation program prior to completion due to poor academic performance; (4) the percentage of scholars completing the preparation program who are working in the area(s) in which they were prepared upon program completion; (5) the Federal cost per scholar who completed the preparation program; (6) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in high-need districts; and (7) the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and who are rated effective by their employers.

In addition, the Department will gather information on the following outcome measures: the number and percentage of scholars proposed by the grantee in their application that were actually enrolled and making satisfactory academic progress in the current academic year; the number and percentage of enrolled scholars who are on track to complete the training program by the end of the project's original grant period; and the percentage of scholars who completed the preparation program and are employed in the field of special education for at least two years.

Grantees may be asked to participate in assessing and providing information on these aspects of program quality.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial

progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the

Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

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Katherine Neas,
*Deputy Assistant Secretary,
delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties
of the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special
Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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